

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A process for the manufacture of intermediate food products in thea form of hydrated concentrates of myofibrillar proteins from fish flesh, said process comprising the following steps ~~in succession in the order shown~~:

- ~~first of all,~~ an initial pulp (B) of minced fish flesh is prepared (1) from fish fillets (A);
- said initial pulp is ~~then~~ washed (2) with water (C) to obtain a washed pulp (H) containing a residual fraction of lipids and sarcoplasmic proteins comprised between 0.1 and 3% of the weight of the pulp;
- said washed pulp (H) is ~~then~~ refined in the wet state (3) by removing a fraction of impurities (K);
- the refined pulp (J) is ~~then~~ mixed (4) until it is in thea form of a homogeneous emulsion (L);
- the emulsified pulp (L) is ~~then~~ drained (6) to produce a densified pulp (O);
- cryoprotectants (Q) are ~~then~~ added (7) to the densified pulp (O) to form a final pulp (R) suitable for freezing;
- the final pulp (R) is ~~then~~ packaged (8) in thea form of blocks (S);
- and said blocks (S) are frozen (9).

2. (Currently Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the pulping operation (1) is coupled with ~~the~~ addition of water.

3. (Currently Amended) The process as claimed in claim 2, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the water is added in a ratio of at least one volume of water to three volumes of pulp.

4. (Currently Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1 ~~or 2~~, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the pulping operation (1) is carried out as a function of a density gradient of ~~the material~~ fish fillets.

5. (Currently Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~wherein the washing operation (2) is composed of the following steps:

- water (C) is added to the initial pulp (B) and the whole is mixed (10) to form a water-pulp mixture (E);
- the water-pulp mixture (E) is centrifuged (11) and the resulting water (G) is removed;
- and the centrifuged pulp (F) is washed continuously (12) with water (C).

6. (Currently Amended) The process as claimed in claim 5, ~~characterized in that~~wherein in the centrifugation step (11), ~~the~~a volume of water removed (E) is between 80 and 95% of ~~the~~a volume of water initially used.

7. (Currently Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~wherein the mixing operation (4) is carried out until the homogenized pulp (L) is in ~~the~~a form of an emulsion with a stability of more than 10 minutes.

8. (Currently Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~wherein the mixing step (4) is followed by a deodorization (5) of the emulsified pulp (L) in which the latter is evacuated.

9. (Currently Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~wherein the operation (6) for draining the emulsified pulp (L) is carried out by centrifugal decantation.

10. (Currently Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~wherein the final pulp (R) is subjected to a cold extrusion operation (7) during addition of cryoprotectants (Q).

11. (Currently Amended) An installation for carrying out the process as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that it comprises the following elements successively assembled in series in the order shown~~comprising:

- a pulping device (101) also provided with a waste recovery trough (139);
- a pulp washing device (102) provided with a system for discharging the wash waters;
- a pulp refining device (103) provided with a system (142) for discharging the fraction of impurities removed (K);
- a continuous pulp mixing device (104);
- a pulp draining device (106) provided with a system (143) for discharging the liquid fraction (P);
- a device (123) for adding cryoprotectants (Q) to the pulp;
- a device (108) for forming the pulp into blocks (S);
- and a device (109) for freezing the blocks (S).

12. (Currently Amended) The installation as claimed in claim 11, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the pulp pulping device (101) ~~consists of~~ comprises a cylindrical sieve having perforations of different diameter according to a linear gradient ranging from 0.2 to 0.4 mm; and ~~of a~~ variable-pitch endless screw conveyor placed inside said sieve, which is provided upstream with a hopper.

13. (Currently Amended) The installation as claimed in claim 11, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the washing device (102) ~~consists of the following elements successively assembled in series~~ comprises:

- a refrigerated double-chamber tank (110) equipped with a pipe for ~~the~~ optional addition of water (C) and with mixing equipment;
- a screen centrifuge (111);
- and a continuous washing device (112) ~~consisting~~ comprising of a refrigerated double-chamber cylindrical tank equipped with a pipe for the addition of water, and with mixing equipment.

14. (Currently Amended) The installation as claimed in claim 11, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the pulp mixing device (104) is a static continuous mixer of the LPD (low pressure drop) type.

15. (Currently Amended) The installation as claimed in claim 11, ~~characterized in that it also comprises~~further comprising a deodorization device (105)-located behind the mixing device-(104).

16. (Currently Amended) The installation as claimed in claim 11, ~~characterized in that~~wherein the pulp draining device is a centrifugal decantation device-(106).

17. (Currently Amended) The installation as claimed in claim 11, ~~characterized in that it also comprises~~further comprising a cold extrusion device (107)-allowing the addition (123)-of cryoprotectants-(Q).

18. (Currently Amended) The installation as claimed in claim 11, ~~characterized in that~~wherein the cold extrusion device-(107) ~~consists of the following elements successively assembled in series~~ comprises:

- a conveyor of the hooded screw conveyor type-(113);
- a controlled-throughput ram -(114);
- and a double-screw extruder (115)-equipped with means (126)-for monitoring and regulating the pressure.

19. (Currently Amended) Surimi-base and other intermediate food products obtained from oily fish by the process as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ thewherein a residual fat content is between 0.1 and 1.5%.

20. (Currently Amended) Surimi-base and other intermediate food products as claimed in claim 19, ~~characterized in that~~wherein the oily fish are sardine, scad, mackerel or sardinella.

21. (New) The process as claimed in claim 2, wherein the pulping operation is carried out as a function of a density gradient of the fish fillets.